

Department of State

TEHRAN

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AN: 0700448-1099

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT 31 EUR-12 150-00 NAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-00 L-03 NBAE-00 NBC-00 PA-01
SP-02 BS-15 FCA-11 SAA-01 SES-01 SOE-02 AID-05
CEA-01 COAE-00 EB-08 ODE-15 INT-05 OMB-01 DES-09
STR-07 TRSE-08 ACDA-12 LAB-04 SIL-01 HA-05 MCT-02
AGRE-00 /166 W
----- 024533 312023Z /14

P. R. 011062Z OCT 78

FM AMEMBASSY TAIWAN
TO SECRETARY OF STATE PRIORITY 1270
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL DRAFT

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR

USCINCPAC

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EO 11662: GDS

TARG: PINS, PGUY, PINT, IR

SUBJ: LOOKING AHEAD: SHIFTING IRANIAN PUBLIC ATTITUDES

SUMMARY: EVENTS OF PAST MONTH, PARTICULARLY PAST WEEK, HAVE LED TO CLEARLY DISCERNABLE SHIFTS IN ATTITUDES REGARDING SHAH AND SOI AMONG MANY GROUPS OF IRANIANS. SUCH CHANGES, WHILE SIGNIFICANT IN THE SHORT RUN, ARE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT.

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BECAUSE THEY FORESHADOW CHANGED WAYS OF THINKING AND BELIEVING

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ABOUT POLITICS IN IRAN. MOST IMPORTANT CURRENTS ARE: A) RENEWED QUESTIONING OF SHAH'S EFFECTIVENESS AND LEGITIMACY, PARTICULARLY BY GROUPS WHICH HERETOFORE HAVE GIVEN AT LEAST TACIT ALLEGIANCE (AND USUALLY MUCH MORE) TO SHAH AND GOVERNMENT; B) GROWING BELIEF AMONG ALL SEGMENTS OF SOCIETY NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN GOVERNMENT THAT SHARIAT-E-ENAVI REGIME CARRIES TOO MUCH BAGGAGE FROM PAST TO BE ABLE TO SUCCESSFULLY RESTORE ORDER OR PROVIDE FOR TRANSITION TO FREELY-ELECTED GOVERNMENT; C) REALIZATION AMONG MIDDLE CLASS MODERNIZERS THAT BOTH RELIGIOUS FORCES AND COMMUNISTS HAVE MUCH MORE ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY THAN MOST IMAGINED; AND D) RAPIDLY SPREADING FEELING THAT PRESENT GOI WILL NOT BE ABLE TO COMPROMISE WITH RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP AND THAT ALTERNATIVE IS LIKELY TO BE MILITARY GOVERNMENT AND RATHER SOONER THAN LATER (LATTER BELIEF IS WIDESPREAD AMONG BOTH SUPPORTERS AND OPPONENTS OF SHAH). DESPITE PERSIAN TENDENCY TO MANIC-DEPRESSIVE CYCLES IN POLITICS, SHIFT IN BASIC ASSUMPTIONS WHICH HAVE UNTIL NOW GOVERNED MOST PEOPLES' BEHAVIOR WILL FURTHER REDUCE STABILITY OF IRANIAN PUBLIC OPINION. BOTH PRO-AND ANTI-SHAH ELEMENTS ARE AGREED MONARCH MUST SHOW BETTER LEADERSHIP AND DETERMINATION IF HE IS TO SHAPE EVENTS HIS WAY AND REVIVE THE CENTER IN IRANIAN POLITICS. END SUMMARY.

1. OVER PAST TEN DAYS, NUMBER OF EMBODIES HAVE NOTICED BASIC CHANGES IN ATTITUDES AMONG DIFFERENT CLASSES AND CATEGORIES OF INDIVIDUALS. WHAT FOLLOWS IS COMPILED AND INITIAL ANALYSIS OF SOME CHANGES WHICH ARE BOUND TO AFFECT FUNDAMENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT IN IRAN. WHILE THEY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE AN IMPACT IN THE SHORT RUN, PERHAPS THEIR GREATER IMPORTANCE IS IN FORESHADOWING CHANGED WAYS OF THINKING ABOUT POLITICS WHICH IN THE LONG

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RUN MAY ALTER THE POLITICAL SHAPE OF THE COUNTRY.

2. MOST SIGNIFICANT OF THESE IS WIDESPREAD, NEARLY UNIVERSAL PESSIMISM AMONG VIRTUALLY ALL GROUPS IN MODERN SECTOR OF SOCIETY ABOUT FUTURE OF COUNTRY AND GOVERNMENT. PUBLIC REFUSAL OF AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI TO COMPROMISE WITH GOI AND ECHOING VIEWS OF AYATOLLAH SHARIATMAADI (TEHRAN 10499) HAVE CREATED PESSIMISM ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF ENDING CURRENT UNREST AND POLITICAL CRISIS ANY TIME SOON ON TERMS WHICH WOULD ALLOW CONTINUED POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION. UPPER CLASS

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SUPPORTERS OF SHAH (INCLUDING SOME SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS), WIDE RANGE OF BUSINESSMEN, PLUS SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF IRAN'S MODERATE ACADEMIC "ESTABLISHMENT", BELIEVE THAT "END" OF PRESENT POLITICAL GAME IS LIKELY TO BE MILITARY RULE. THERE IS WIDESPREAD AGREEMENT AMONG SUBSTANTIAL MEMBERS OF THOUGHTFUL PERSIANS THAT SHAH HAS NOT EXERCISED EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP. HE HAS NOT EVEN TAKEN "OBVIOUS" OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS HIS PEOPLE DIRECTLY ON TV AND DISCUSS ISSUES WITH THEM. HE SEEMS STILL TO THINK THE PEOPLE TOO INNOCENT FOR SERIOUS EXPLANATIONS. THIS IS PARALLELED BY A WILLINGNESS AMONG SIZABLE NUMBERS WHO HAVE SUPPORTED THE SHAH CONSISTENTLY AS IRAN'S BEST HOPE FOR THE FUTURE TO QUESTION WHETHER THE SHAH SHOULD REMAIN. THEY DO NOT WISH TO DO HIM IN, BUT THEY SEE LITTLE HOPE TO BREAK THE DEMONSTRATION CYCLE IN

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SAA-01 SES-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 ED-08 INR-10 LAB-04 NSAE-00
SIL-01 MA-05 MCT-02 SOE-02 AJO-05 CEA-01 DDE-00
DOE-16 H-01 INT-05 L-03 NSC-05 OMB-01 PH-01
ICA-11 SES-09 SP-02 SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 WEDA-12
PA-01 AGRE-00 TTS-6

10. The following table gives the number of hours worked by each of the 100 workers.

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PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. SOME WOULD EVEN CHANGE A REGENCY FOR THE CROWN PRINCE. THEY ARE, FOR THEM, "THINKING THE UNTHINKABLE" FOR THE FIRST TIME.

3. SUBSTANTIAL ELEMENT IN THIS PATTERN IS WIDESPREAD PERCEPTION BY GROUPS NOTED ABOVE PLUS CIVIL SEPARATISTS AND EVEN SOME MILITARY, THAT SHARIF-EMAMI GOVERNMENT IS BEING OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS. MORE IN GORROU THAN IN ANTEM. SUB-

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STANTIAL NUMBERS OF BUREAUCRATS, YOUNG TECHNOCRATS, BUSINESS-MEN AND OTHERS WITH LARGEST STAKE IN MODERNIZATION WHICH

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GOT ITSELF HAS FOSTERED FOR PAST TWO DECADES) ARE CONCLUDING THAT SHARIF-EMAMI GOVERNMENT MUST GO. TOP SHARIF-EMAMI MINISTRY MEMBERS HAVE "RAMPAGED AT WILL" THROUGH MINISTRIES FOR PAST PERIOD OF FIVE DAYS, AND HAVE VIRTUALLY BROUGHT CERTAIN MINISTRIES' WORK TO A HALT. THIS IS REINFORCED BY VIRTUALLY UNANIMOUS VIEW OF ALL POLITICIANS WHO THEMSELVES DO NOT HAVE DIRECT STAKE IN GOVERNMENT THAT SHARIF-EMAMI GOVERNMENT AND PRIME MINISTER HIMSELF ARE TOO CORRUPTED WITH PAST TO EVER BE ABLE TO PRESTIDE OVER FREE ELECTIONS. FROM MODERATE POLITICIANS NOW ORGANIZING CENTRIST GROUPS (WHO AVOW SUPPORT FOR PRIMIN "AT LEAST UNTIL ELECTIONS") TO NATIONAL FRONTISTS WHO CALL FOR "NEUTRAL" GOVERNMENT, THERE IS BELIEF THAT GOVERNMENTAL CHANGE MUST COME. ECHOING VIEW IS THAT ANY NEW TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT MUST CONTAIN AT LEAST SOME "NON-ESTABLISHMENT" POLITICIANS IN IT. CORRUPTION ISSUE HAS BEEN WELL USED BY OPPONENTS OF REGIME TO DISCREDIT MANY IF NOT MOST POLITICIANS OF PAST FIVE TO SEVEN YEARS. EVEN POLITICIANS CLOSE TO PRESENT SCENE WILL RELUCTANTLY CONCLUDE IN PRIVATE THAT DAYS OF SHAH'S HAND-PICKED GOVERNMENT ARE PROBABLY GONE FOREVER. GOVERNMENT'S INABILITY TO RESTORE PUBLIC ORDER, MORE THAN ANY PROCLAMATION ABOUT POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION, HAS TURNED MODERN IRAN INTO PARTICIPATORY STATE IN PUBLIC EYE. (CENTRAL PROBLEM WITH THIS PERCEPTION IS THAT SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY FORMERLY ALIENATED NON-POLITICIANS AND OPPOSITIONISTS, BUT ALSO INCLUDING ESTABLISHMENT TYPES SUCH AS CIVIL SERVANTS, SEE EFFECTIVE POLITICAL ACTION NOW IN TERMS OF STRIKES AND DEMONSTRATIONS, NOT ORDERED PARTICIPATION IN ELECTION OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS.)

4. ANOTHER NEW PERCEPTION, WHICH HAS COME AS A RATHER

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UNPLEASANT SURPRISE TO GOVERNMENT, SECULAR OPPOSITION, AND MOB OWNERS OF ALL STRIPES IS REALIZATION THAT RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND ESPECIALLY EX-TUDEH (COMMUNIST) SUPPORTERS ARE MUCH BETTER ORGANIZERS THAN ANYONE IMAGINED. VIRTUALLY ALL ACADEMICS AGREE THAT MAJOR IRANIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENT BODIES ARE BEING POLARIZED ABOUT 70-30 BETWEEN STUDENTS ADHERING TO ISLAMIC AND COMMUNIST ORGANIZATIONS RESPECTIVELY. UNDERGROUND ORGANIZATION OF TUDEH HAS SURFACED WITHIN PAST WEEK AT VIRTUALLY ALL UNIVERSITIES (INCLUDING AMERICAN-FOUNDED DAMAVAND COLLEGE FOR GIRLS, WHICH HAS NEVER HAD A SERIOUS DEMONSTRATION BEFORE THIS YEAR).

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FOR UNIVERSITY REFORMS AND FULL INDEPENDENCE FOR GOVT. NUMBER OF OUR BEST ACADEMIC SOURCES HAVE SUGGESTED THAT MIDDLE GROUP HAS EVAPORATED ON UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES AND STUDENTS ARE BEING DRAWN TO ONE OF TWO POLES. NEITHER OF WHICH REALLY WANTS SETTLEMENT UNDER PRESENT GOVT. THIS IS UNDERSTANDABLY, DEPRESSED MANY, AND IN MANY CASES CANNOT EXTERIALLY VISCERAL REACTIONS AGAINST SHAH, IS RELATED TO BE UNKIND AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY WHICH HAS LEAD IRAN TO PRESENT SITUATION. DURING PERSIAN WAR, IRAN TRIED TO TRAIN PEOPLE FOR FIGHTING AGAINST TURKEY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, THEREBY LEAVING COUNTRY IN STATE OF ANARCHY. CLEARLY ONE CASUALTY OF CURRENT UPHEAVAL IN IRAN IS THE OBJECTIVE, UNEMOTIONAL ANALYSTS SEE BY ANY GROUP WHICH MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PROVIDE STABILIZING LEADERSHIP UNDER OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES.

5. IF PEOPLE PERCEIVE THAT RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP IS CAPABLE OF KEEPING PEOPLE IN STREETS AGAINST WILL OF GOVERNMENT, ALTERNATIVE HAS INCREASINGLY COME TO BE SEEN AS MORE FEASIBLE. GOVERNMENT. OPPONENTS WOULD FIGHT DESTITUTION OF SHAH, BUT SUSPECT THIS WILL NOT HAPPEN VOLUNTARILY. DURING YEARS OF THE SHAH SEE IRAN'S FIRST NEED AS SOCIAL ORDER. BOTH NOW TEND TO PERCEIVE INEVITABILITY OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT WITH OVERWHELMING PROBABILITY IT WILL BE MIDDLE-LINE APPROX. ENDING DOMESTIC POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION AND PROVOKING

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GREATER ORGANIZED TERRORIST ACTIVITY. PRO-MONARCHISTS SEE

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 180-00 NEAE-00 SAA-01 SEE-01 60E-02
AID-05 CEA-01 CTAE-00 COME-00 COMB-00 EB-06
DOS-15 H-01 IMA-10 INT-05 L-03 NEAE-00 NSC-05
OMB-01 PH-05 TCA!!! OPA-09 SP-02 SS-15 STR-07
TRDE-00 AEDA-12 LAB-04 SIL-01 HA-05 MCT-02 AGRE-00
PA-01 /168 8

-----074006 312026Z /14

P R E S I D E N T I A L OCT 11

TO SECRETARIAL PRIORITY 1272

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI 1062

AMEMBASSY AFGHANISTAN
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY JODHPUR
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USCINCEUR
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THIS AS REGRETTABLE NECESSITY TO PRESERVE MODERN SOCIAL AND
ECONOMIC FABRIC! OPPOSITIONISTS VIEW IT AS TRAGEDY FOR COUNTRY
AND REGRESSIVE FASCISM WHICH WILL OPEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR
TERRORISM.

6. MANY GOVERNMENTAL AND INDUSTRIAL SECTOR EMPLOYEES,
ESPECIALLY BANKERS AND ECONOMIC PLANNERS, SEE CURRENT RASH
OF STRIKES SLOWLY STRANGLING COUNTRY WITH NO "WAY OUT."

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PRIVATELY, MANY SAY SHARIF-EMAMI POLICY OF LETTING MOBS
VENT FEELING HAS GONE BEYOND HOPE OF SUCCESS TO DISRUPT ON

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OF BOTH ECONOMY AND SOCIAL FABRIC. OIL PRODUCTION IS DOWN, FACTORIES ARE IDLE AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS SUCH AS KHUZISTAN SUGAR PLANTATION COMPLEX WILL BE IN RUINS AFTER MONTH OR SO OF NEGLECT. MANY FEEL (AND ARE NOW READY TO DISCUSS WITH THEIR FRIENDS) THAT SOME SORT OF BASIC CHANGE IS NECESSARY. WHILE PERHAPS NOT YET READY TO SERIOUSLY ADVOCATE NEW GOVERNMENT OR REGIME, THEY ARE NOW LISTENING SERIOUSLY TO OPPOSITION ANALYSIS THAT SIX MONTHS AGO WOULD HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED BALDERDAGH.

7. FOLLOWERS OF PERSIAN SCENE WHO ARE USED TO MANIC-DEPRESSIVE NATURE OF PERSIAN POLITICAL THOUGH MAY TEND TO ASCRIBE FEATURES DESCRIBED ABOVE TO STANDARD TOWING AND FRO-TNG OF PEOPLE UNUSED TO DEMOCRATIC RHYTHM AND PARTICI-PARTORY PROBLEMS. SHIFTS IN ATTITUDES GO DEEPER THAN THAT, HOWEVER, TO QUESTIONNING OF BASIC ASSUMPTION OF PAST 15 YEARS THAT SHAH IS TOUGH, UNCHALLENGABLE LEADER WHO IS EFFECTIVE LEADER OF COUNTRY. FEELING THAT POLITICAL PROCESS IS AT DEADEND HAS PRODUCED SENSE OF FRUSTRATION WHICH MAY ULTIMATELY BE MORE DAMAGING TO STABILITY OF IRANIAN PUBLIC OPINION THAN MERE FACTS OF PRESENT UNREST.

8. OVERWHELMING BULK OF IRANIANS OF ALL CLASSES, EVEN HIS OPPONENTS, SEEM TO BE WAITING FOR SHAH TO DO SOMETHING. HABIT OF WAITING FOR THE TOP TO ACT IS HARD TO ERADICATE. SEVERAL PERCEPTIVE PERSIAN OBSERVERS HAVE NOTED THAT ESTABLISHMENT FIGURES SEEM TO BE WAITING AROUND FOR SHAH TO "GIVE THE NOD" TO SOME GROUP OR GROUPS TO BEGIN OPERATING ON HIS BEHALF WITHIN POLITICAL AREA. EFFECT OF THIS "WAITING FOR GOOD" ATTITUDE IS THAT MYRIAD OF NEW POLITICAL PARTIES LACK IMPACT. VIRTUALLY EVERYONE, ESPECIALLY YOUTH

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MAJORITY OF THOSE WHO MIGHT BE CONSIDERED PART OF POLITICAL CENTER, ARE LOOKING FOR LEADERSHIP, HOPEFULLY FROM THE THRONE. EVEN OPPOSITIONISTS FEEL THEY HAVE TO HAVE SOMETHING TO OPPOSE AND THEY SEE THIS AS SHAH AND HIS POLICIES, NOT GOVERNMENT. FOR BOTH SYMBOLIC AND PRACTICAL REASONS, SHAH'S FAILURE TO ACT DECISIVELY (IN FULFILLMENT OF PERSIAN STEREOTYPE), OR EVEN APPEAR ON TV AND ADDRESS HIS PEOPLE, HAS LED TO MORE QUESTIONING, LESS SECURE ATTITUDE AMONG VIRTUALLY ALL SECTORS OF PUBLIC OPINION.

9. EVEN IF ORDER IS RESTORED SHORTLY WITHOUT A MOVE TO

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MILITARY GOVERNMENT, MOST PERSIANS FEEL SHAH MUST DO BETTER
TO SURVIVE. FOR FIRST TIME IN TWO DECADES SERIOUS CONFERENCES
HAVE THOUGHT TO BE NO GIVEN TO OTHER POSSIBILITIES. LACK
OF DIRECT ACTION THUS FAR BY THOSE WHO DO NOT OPPOSE SHAH
AND BY MAN WHO DO GENERALLY REFLECTS ONE ASSUMPTION FROM
PAST THAT REMAINS: THERE IS NO Viable ALTERNATIVE TO SHAH
FOR THIS REASON, EVEN MANY OPPOSITIONISTS THEMSELVES REMAIN
WILLING TO LIVE WITH HIM, ALBEIT AS THE LEADER OF EXILES.
HOWEVER, THIS ASSUMPTION TOO IS COMING UNDER INCREASING
CHALLENGE.

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